AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method of communicating between at least two microcircuit cards ~~(12₁, 12₂, 12₃)~~ having contactless communication means, said method comprising:

using ~~communicating via~~ a communication management unit ~~means (10)~~ to control at least part of the process of communication between said at least two microcircuit cards, said communication management unit employing a command-response protocol using said contactless communication means to communicate with said microcircuit cards ~~(12₁, 12₂, 12₃)~~, upon said microcircuit cards being within a radius of action of said communication management unit;

~~wherein at least one of said microcircuit cards (12₁, 12₂) communicates with said communication management means (10) using said contactless communication means and in that it includes a step consisting in~~ storing in said communication management unit a list of said microcircuit cards that are within the radius of action of said ~~in the~~ communication management ~~means (10), and~~ unit; and

~~said microcircuit cards are at least one of a proximity card with a 10cm range and vicinity card with a 70cm range~~ storing in said communication management unit a message intended for at least one of said microcircuit cards upon the addressee microcircuit card being temporarily out of the radius of action of the communication management unit.

2. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said microcircuit cards ~~(12_1, 12_2, 12_3)~~ constitute a network of acquaintances.

3. (cancelled)

4. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein each of said at least two microcircuit cards ~~(12_1, 12_2, 12_3)~~ is associated with a unique identifier.

5. (previously presented) The method according to claim 4, wherein each identifier is associated with a service or family code.

6. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that it includes a step of creating a mailbox in the communication management means (10) when said list includes a new electronic entity, said mailbox being adapted to receive and store messages sent to or by said new electronic entity.

7. (currently amended) The method according to claim 2, wherein, upon said list including a new microcircuit card, the method further comprising a step of adding the new microcircuit ~~cards~~ card to said network of acquaintances as a function of at least one predetermined criterion.

8. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that it includes steps whereby said communication management means (10):

   - scan (E80) said list of electronic entities,

   - ask (E84) each electronic entity if it has a message to send, and if so:

   - store (E90) said message in a mailbox,

   - send (E94) said message to the electronic entity that is the addressee of the message when it can be contacted, and then:

   - eliminate (E98) the message from said mailbox.

9. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that said mailbox is an inbox.

10. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that it involves at least three electronic entities and in that said communication management means (10) are combined with one of said electronic entities.

11. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that said communication management means (10) serve as a proxy for accessing at least one of said at least two electronic entities.

12. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that it includes a step of assigning a time to live (TTL) to each message awaiting reception by an addressee electronic entity.

13. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that it includes a step of assigning a priority (P) to each message exchanged in the context of said command-response protocol.

14. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that it is adapted to broadcast a message (BROADCAST) from one of said at least two electronic entities to all the other electronic entities.

15. (cancelled)

16. (cancelled)

17. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two microcircuit cards is secure.

18. (cancelled)

19. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said microcircuit cards is a loyalty card.

20. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said microcircuit cards is a payment card.

21. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the method ensures continuity of communication involving one of said microcircuit cards and an antenna from a plurality of antennas connected to the communication management means when said microcircuit card moves in such a manner that said communication involves another antenna from said plurality of antennas.

22. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that said electronic entities participate in a process of personalizing a contactless object and in that said process includes at least one step of mutual authentication of the electronic entities, reciprocal or otherwise.

23. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, characterized in that said process includes passing the object (44) to be personalized in front of a plurality of stations (46) each including wireless communication means connected to the communication management means (10) and in that said method ensures continuity of the personalization process when the object passes from one station to the next.

24. (cancelled)

25. (currently amended) A communication system comprising:

at least two microcircuit cards ~~(12₁, 12₂, 12₃)~~ having contactless communication means;

a communication management unit that employs a command-response protocol to communicate with said at least two microcircuit cards using said contactless communication means <u>upon said microcircuits cards being within a radius of action of said communication management unit</u>, said communication management unit having stored therein a list of said microcircuit cards ~~communicating with~~ <u>that are within the radius of action of</u> said communication management unit ~~using said contactless communication means~~,

wherein the at least one of said microcircuit cards ~~(12₁, 12₂)~~ communicates with said communication management unit ~~(10)~~ using said contactless communication means, and

~~said microcircuit cards are at least one of a proximity card with a 10cm range and vicinity card with a 70cm range~~

<u>wherein said communication management unit includes means for storing a message intended for at least one of said microcircuit cards upon the addressee microcircuit card being temporarily out of the radius of action of the communication management unit.</u>

26. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said list of said microcircuit cards in the communication management means ~~(10)~~ includes a list of all said microcircuit cards in ~~communications~~ communication with the communication management means ~~(10)~~ separate from a list of said microcircuit cards in communication with other said microcircuit cards.

27. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the proximity card with a 10cm range complies with ISO/IEC standard 14443 and the vicinity card with a 70cm range complies with ISO/IEC standard 15693.

28. (previously presented) The communication system according to claim 25, wherein the proximity card with a 10cm range complies with ISO/IEC standard 14443 and the vicinity card with a 70cm range complies with ISO/IEC standard 15693.

29. (new – withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, wherein the method comprises a step of creating a mailbox in the communication management unit when said list includes a new microcircuit card that is able to exchange messages with at least one of the microcircuit cards, said mailbox being adapted to receive and store messages sent to or by said new microcircuit card, and wherein a message intended for a microcircuit card when the addressee microcircuit card is temporarily out of range of the communication management unit, is stored in the mailbox created for: said addressee microcircuit card.

30. (new – withdrawn) The communication system according to claim 25, wherein said communication management unit includes means for creating a mailbox when said list includes a new microcircuit card that is able to exchange messages with at least one of the microcircuit cards, said mailbox being adapted to receive and store messages sent to or by said new microcircuit card.